

Mount Abraham Unified School District 72 Munsill Avenue, Building 6, Suite 601, Bristol, VT 05443 Phone: (802) 453-3657 * www.mausd.org * Fax: (802) 453-2029

Shaping Our Future Together

November 9, 2022

Dear Chair Samuelson,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide the State Board of Education with information that demonstrates the implications of creating a new supervisory union consisting of Lincoln and MAUSD. As you know, the MAUSD Board is opposed to being deconstructed and forced into a supervisory union with the Lincoln School District. The information provided below will clearly demonstrate that deconstructing MAUSD and forcing it into a newly created supervisory union with Lincoln will not "afford increased efficiency or greater convenience and economy" and will not "facilitate prekindergarten through grade 12 curriculum planning and coordination".

Will Not Afford Increased Efficiency or Greater Convenience and Economy

MAUSD became fully operational as a supervisory district on July 1, 2018 following voter approval from each of the five towns that were served by the former Addison Northeast Supervisory Union. Since 2018 MAUSD has benefited tremendously from the increased efficiency and greater convenience and economy provided by this preferred governance structure. Having one board, one employer and one budget has given us the flexibility needed to reduce staffing in response to declining student enrollment while enhancing our ability to meet student needs. Since 2018 MAUSD has reduced approximately 29 positions, nearly all through attrition, while strengthening our Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS). When we needed to reduce a classroom teaching position at one of our small elementary schools we were able to reassign one of the teachers to a vacant position at another school. This kind of reassignment is not able to happen when the schools have separate employers, as would be the case in a supervisory union. This would have meant the teacher was out of a job rather than working in a different school under the same contract and same rate of pay. I am confident we would not have been able to achieve the efficiencies we did, with as much respect for our employees as we did, in a supervisory union structure that has multiple employers, and reduced ability to assign staff to different schools.

Forcing MAUSD into a supervisory union with Lincoln would require adding central office staff to account for going from one budget to three budgets (MAUSD, LSD, ANESU), from one board to three boards, from one audit to three audits, from one set of accounts payable

to three, from one set of payroll accounts to three, from two collective bargaining agreements (licensed staff and support staff) to possibly six (2 for each district and 2 for SU employees). This kind of duplicative work is neither efficient nor convenient. Deconstruction of MAUSD will also create an unbalanced structure consisting of one large district and one very small district. Based on the 2020 Census, the Mt.Abe district would comprise 88% of the district's population and Lincoln only 12%. Two districts of such different sizes would likely have different needs and not necessarily be aligned for overall operations. Unless action is taken to address the issue, each member district would have three seats on the SU Board. Such an imbalance of representation would not be seen as a greater convenience to MAUSD.

Forcing MAUSD into a supervisory union with Lincoln could significantly impact staffing levels for MAUSD. Schools are required to adopt a Title I Comparability policy. This required policy, as written in the VSBA model policy manual, requires Title I eligible schools to provide comparable services, staffing levels, curriculum materials, and instructional supplies to that of non-Title I eligible schools. Under this required policy, it is possible that if the Lincoln School District Board decided to add services, staffing, curricular materials or instructional supplies to the non-Title I eligible Lincoln Community School, that would mean the MAUSD Board would be required to provide comparable services, staffing, curricular materials or instructional supplies to the three Title I eligible schools in MAUSD. This added cost would either come from raising taxes or reducing spending in other areas.

Forcing MAUSD into a supervisory union with Lincoln would result in a significant assessment to Lincoln for supervisory services. Because MAUSD has been operating as a supervisory district that includes Lincoln since 2018 we are in a unique position to understand what supervisory service costs would be directly attributable to Lincoln should we be forced into a supervisory union together. I want to be clear that while some of the cost burden would be shifted to the Lincoln School District through the SU assessment MAUSD would experience a loss of leadership, management and operational time and energy given the disproportionate amount of support the Lincoln School District would need as they face a myriad of challenges in becoming operational and sustainable.

Our current projections show a FY24 supervisory union assessment to Lincoln at approximately \$880,000. A strong argument could be made that this figure should be larger to recognize the actual impact of shifting from a supervisory district to a supervisory union. The reality is there is no way to assess LSD all of the true cost of shifting from an SD to an SU. For example, it does not pass the straight-faced test to assess LSD all of the costs associated with having an SU board even though the only reason we would have an SU board is because they left MAUSD. This means MAUSD will be paying a portion of the cost, including soft costs, related to the governance of the SU. The MAUSD finance team added the \$880,000 assessment to the draft FY24 LSD expense budget shared with us by the LSD Board bringing the projected LSD expense budget up to just over \$4,795,000 and education spending projected at just under \$4,635,000. With approximately 172 equalized pupils this equates to a cost per equalized pupil of \$26,945. This is an increase of almost \$7,120 per equalized pupil, or nearly 36%, over the

current cost per equalized pupil in MAUSD for FY23. As a member of a supervisory union the LSD will have essentially three buckets of expenses. They will have a supervisory union assessment that they have no control over other than their representation on the SU Board, they will have the tuition they pay for their secondary students that they have no control over, and they will have the expenses of operating a K-6 school that they do have control over. This means any money they need to save to minimize the impact their budget has on the tax rate will come from the operation of their K-6 school with a projected enrollment of 62 in FY24. To put this into perspective, if the LSD Board wanted to match the current projected increase in the cost per equalized pupil for FY 24 if MAUSD were to remain a five town district (\$767) it would need to reduce the cost per equalized pupil by approximately \$6,353. That would mean reducing the expenses related to operating their K-6 school (projected to be a little under \$2 million after subtracting secondary tuition and tech center tuition from the LSD budget) by almost \$1.1 million or roughly 55%. For more details on budgeting I have attached the October 25 presentation I gave to the MAUSD Board as we contemplated the various budget scenarios as we await a decision from the SBE.

Will Not Facilitate Pre-Kindergarten Through Grade 12 Curriculum Planning and Coordination

Forcing MAUSD into a supervisory union with Lincoln would not facilitate curriculum planning and coordination but the impact could be manageable if both district boards and the SU Board are on the same page. Should one of these boards act in a way that does not support a common vision, this is when the planning and coordination would begin to get problematic. Presumably curriculum decisions would be made at the SU level and implemented across both districts, as they were when we were a supervisory union years ago. Things such as grants would likely not be duplicative because rather than remaining district specific they would shift to being SU wide. With regards to a multi-tiered system of support it is a bit less clear because of the staffing needed to ensure sufficient support at the universal, targeted and intensive levels. If more of the staffing decisions to support an MTSS are made at the district level then coordination of these services would be more challenging due to the potential for differing decisions by different boards. If more of the staffing decisions are centralized at the SU level and assessed to districts then coordination of these services would be less challenging.

Some other potential impacts to curricular planning and coordination stem from more logistical decisions such as having a different number of professional development days, different number of student contact days, and different length of school days. While these are possible challenges it seems unlikely that these would present as formidable challenges to overcome.

In light of the failed vote to merge MAUSD with ANWSD, if MAUSD were to be deconstructed into a supervisory union with LSD this could make any future attempt to merge more difficult. This would complicate, if not take off the table, one of the most effective tools we might have to address the impact declining enrollment has on our students or our taxpayers.

This tool is one that nearly everyone deeply involved in the study process saw as one of our best paths forward to provide a high quality education at a cost taxpayers can afford.

Respectfully Submitted,

Patrick J. Reen Superintendent for MAUSD



FY24 Budget Presentation 10/25/22

FY24 Budget As 5 Town Supervisory District (Same as FY19-FY23)

Assumptions Behind the October Figures

- Assumes reduction of 1.0 classroom teacher at Robinson to reflect enrollment decline
- Assumes 12.5% Increase in Healthcare Premiums
- Assumes Reduction of 23.58 EQP
- Includes no spending threshold
- Assumes Revenue is increased by \$257,231

Recommendation for Use of Fund Balance

- Place entire fund balance into Capital Reserve and Education Reserve
- Little application of fund balance to offset taxes for FY24 positions us well to address financial challenges anticipated in FY25

	FY18 - FY24				
FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	

Beeman

Bristol

Lincoln

Monkton

Robinson

Mt. Abe

Total

		FY18 - FY24					
	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22		

Enrollment By School							
FY18 - FY24							

* Currently 3 students attend LCS on tuition waivers from MAUSD. This projection assumes those students remain at LCS.

		nent By /18 - FY	

FY23

FY24 Projected

65*

Average Class Size Across Elementary Schools

		<u> 2022 - 2023</u>		<u> 2023 - 2024 Projected</u>			
	Avg K-2 Class Size	Avg 3-6 Class Size	Overall Avg Class Size	Avg K-2 Class Size	Avg 3-6 Class Size	Overall Avg Class Size	
Beeman	13	20	15.8	15.67	22.5	18.4	
Bristol	14.14**	18.125	16.4	18.5	17.38	18	
Lincoln	14	21.5	17.75	14*	18.5*	16.25*	
Monkton	18	17.75	17.86	20.67	14.75	17.43	
Robinson	13.67	16.5	15.43	13.33	20	16.67	

^{*} Currently 3 students attending LCS are on tuition waivers from MAUSD. This projection assumes those students remain at LCS.

^{**} A kindergarten classroom was added at BES in anticipation of a larger than typical kindergarten cohort which did not materialize. This added position is not included in the class size figures for FY24.

^{***} Enrollment figures assume a reduction of one classroom at Robinson

Class Size Guidelines

Grade Cluster	Minimum Average	Optimal Average Range	Maximum Average
K-2	14	14-18	20
3-4	14	14-18	Grade 3 = 20 Grade 4 = 25
5-6	14	14-20	25
7-8	14	14-22	25
9-12	18	18-22	English - 100 per teacher Others - 150 per teacher

\$0 Fund Balance Used

(2.69% increase in spending/ 3.87% increase in cost per pupil)

	FY 20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24
Total Expenses	\$30,950,235	\$31,399,182	\$31,753,310	\$32,665,311	\$33,544,114
	(+\$1,918,701)	(+448,947)	(+354,128)	(+912,001)	(+878,803)
Revenue	\$4,493,346	\$3,972,111	\$4,426,845	\$4,060,615	\$4,317,846
	(+\$491,146)	(-\$521,235)	(+454,734)	(-\$366,230)	(+\$257,231)
Education	\$26,456,889	\$27,427,071	\$27,326,465	\$28,604,696	\$29,226,268
Spending	(+\$1,427,556)	(+\$970,182)	(-100,606)	(+\$1,278,231)	(+\$621,572)
Equalized Pupils	1477.77	1465.19	1465.71	1442.76	1419.18
	(-32.37)	(-12.58)	(+0.52)	(-22.95)	(-23.58)
Spending per Eq. Pupil w/\$ and % Change	\$17,903.25	\$18,719.12	\$18,643.84	\$19,826.37	\$20,593.77
	(+\$1,353.58)	(+\$815.87)	(-\$75.28)	(+\$1,182.53)	(+\$767.40)
	+8.1%	+4.6%	40%	+6.34%	+3.87%

FY24 Spending Threshold

Projected Spending Threshold Per EQP	Projected Spending Per EQP	Amount Per EQP <mark>Over</mark> Threshold	Projected EQP	Amount Over Spending Threshold
\$20,576	\$20,593.77	\$17.77	1419.18	\$25,219

Projected Tax Rates If \$0 Fund Balance Used

	FY 24						
	Bristol	Bristol Lincoln Monkton New Have					
Homestead Tax Rate	1.5254	1.5452	1.5452	1.5452	1.5452		
Act 46 Adjustment	00	00	00	00	00		
Adjusted Homestead Tax	1.5452	1.5452	1.5452	1.5452	1.5452		
Current CLA	87.4%	100.17%	87.78%	87.25%	82.68%		
Property Tax Rate	1.7680	1.5426	1.7603	1.7710	1.8689		

Projected Change in Tax Rates If \$0 Fund Balance Used

	Property Tax Rate (After CLA)					
	FY 22	FY 23	FY 24	Change	Assessed Value	
Bristol	1.7641	1.7534	1.7881	+.0347	+\$34.70	
Lincoln	1.5266	1.5299	1.5601	+.0302	+\$30.20	
Monkton	1.7482	1.7458	1.7804	+.0346	+\$34.60	
New Haven	1.7801	1.7564	1.7912	+.0348	+\$34.80	
Starksboro	1.7486	1.8543	1.8902	+.0367	+\$36.70	

Projected Change in Tax Rates w/ \$0 of Fund Balance Used Based on Income

Education Tax Based on Addison County 2020 Median Income	\$70,262
Education Tax FY23	\$1,982
Education Tax FY24	\$1,834
Projected \$ Decrease	\$148
Projected % Decrease	7.47%

FY24 Budget As 4 Town Supervisory **District** Not In A Supervisory Union w/Lincoln

Assumptions Behind the October Figures

- Assumes all the same assumptions as 5 town SD plus
- Assumes all employees at Lincoln remain with MAUSD
- Assumes we reduce staffing by the same number of FTEs currently assigned to Lincoln

Recommendation for Use of Fund Balance

- Place entire fund balance into Capital Reserve and Education Reserve
- Little application of fund balance to offset taxes for FY24 positions us well to address financial challenges anticipated in FY25

Enrollment By School FY18 - FY24

FY21

73

256

120

FY22

78

249

123

FY23

79

246

126

FY24 Projected

92

254**

123**

100

597*

1166

Robinson	157	131	125	119	117	108	
Mt. Abe	652	617	646	672	656	631	
Total	1295	1223	1240	1240	1223	1190	

FY20

78

260

131

FY19

78

252

145

FY18

90

255

141

Beeman

Monkton

Bristol

^{*} Assumes 75% of Lincoln students in grades 7-12 attend Mt. Abraham.

^{**} Assumes MAUSD students attending LCS on a tuition waiver attend school in the town where they reside.

Average Class Size Across Elementary Schools

		<u> 2022 - 2023</u>		20) <u>23 - 2024 Proje</u> c	<u>cted</u>
	Avg K-2 Class Size	Avg 3-6 Class Size	Overall Avg Class Size	Avg K-2 Class Size	Avg 3-6 Class Size	Overall Avg Class Size
Beeman	13	20	15.8	15.67	22.5	18.4
Bristol	14.14**	18.125	16.4	18.83*	17.38	18.14*
Monkton	18	17.75	17.86	21*	14.75	17.57*
Robinson	13.67	16.5	15.43	13.33	20	16.67

^{*} Currently 3 students attending LCS are on tuition waivers from MAUSD. This projection assumes those students return to MAUSD.

^{**} A kindergarten classroom was added at BES in anticipation of a larger than typical kindergarten cohort which did not materialize.

This added position is not included in the class size figures for FY24.

^{**} Enrollment figures assume a reduction of one classroom at Robinson

Class Size Guidelines

Grade Cluster	Minimum Average	Optimal Average Range	Maximum Average
K-2	14	14-18	20
3-4	14	14-18	Grade 3 = 20 Grade 4 = 25
5-6	14	14-20	25
7-8	14	14-22	25
9-12	18	18-22	English - 100 per teacher Others - 150 per teacher

\$0 Fund Balance Used

(6.51% increase in cost per pupil)

	FY24
Total Expenses	\$32,018,649
Revenue	\$5,681,569
Education Spending	\$26,337,111
Equalized Pupils	1247.18
Spending per Eq. Pupil w/\$ and % Change	\$21,117.33 (+\$1,290.96) +6.51%

FY24 Spending Threshold

Projected Spending Threshold Per EQP	Projected Spending Per EQP	Amount Per EQP Over Threshold	Projected EQP	Amount Over Spending Threshold
\$20,576	\$21,117.33	\$541.33	1247.18	\$675,136

Projected Tax Rates If \$0 Fund Balance Used

		FY 2	24	
	Bristol	Monkton	New Haven	Starksboro
Homestead Tax Rate	1.5861	1.5861	1.5861	1.5861
Act 46 Adjustment	00	00	00	00
Adjusted Homestead Tax	1.5861	1.5861	1.5861	1.5861
Current? CLA	87.40	87.78	87.25%	82.68%
Property Tax Rate	1.8148	1.8069	1.8179	1.9184

Projected Change in Tax Rates If \$0 Fund Balance Used

			y Tax Rate er CLA)		Change Per \$100,000 of
	FY 22	FY 23	FY 24	Change	Assessed Value
Bristol	1.7631	1.7534	1.8148	+.0615	+\$61.50
Monkton	1.7482	1.7458	1.8069	+.0611	+\$61.10
New Haven	1.7801	1.7564	1.8179	+.0615	+\$61.50
Starksboro	1.7486	1.8543	1.9184	+.0649	+64.90

Projected Change in Tax Rates w/ \$0 of Fund Balance Used Based on Income

Education Tax Based on Addison County 2020 Median Income	\$70,262
Education Tax FY23	\$1,981
Education Tax FY24	\$1,982
Projected \$ Increase	\$1
Projected % Increase	.00%

ANESU FY24 Central Office (Purchased Services) Budget

Purchased Services Assessments to Districts

	MAUSD	LSD	Total
Ant. FY24 SU Assessment	\$7,918,431	\$878,630	\$8,797,061
% of Total SU Assessment	90.01%	9.99%	

FY24 Budget As 4 Town District In A Supervisory Union w/Lincoln

Assumptions Behind the October Figures

- Assumes all the same assumptions as 4 town SD plus
- Assumes SU assessment

Recommendation for Use of Fund Balance

- Place entire fund balance into Capital Reserve and Education Reserve
- Little application of fund balance to offset taxes for FY24 positions us well to address financial challenges anticipated in FY25

Enrollment By School FY18 - FY24

FY21

73

256

120

FY22

78

249

123

FY23

79

246

126

FY24 Projected

92

254**

123**

100

597*

1166

Robinson	157	131	125	119	117	108	
Mt. Abe	652	617	646	672	656	631	
Total	1295	1223	1240	1240	1223	1190	

FY20

78

260

131

FY19

78

252

145

FY18

90

255

141

Beeman

Monkton

Bristol

^{*} Assumes 75% of Lincoln students in grades 7-12 attend Mt. Abraham.

^{**} Assumes MAUSD students attending LCS on a tuition waiver attend school in the town where they reside.

Average Class Size Across Elementary Schools

		<u> 2022 - 2023</u>		20	23 - 2024 Projec	<u>cted</u>
	Avg K-2 Class Size	Avg 3-6 Class Size	Overall Avg Class Size	Avg K-2 Class Size	Avg 3-6 Class Size	Overall Avg Class Size
Beeman	13	20	15.8	15.67	22.5	18.4
Bristol	14.14**	18.125	16.4	18.83*	17.38	18.14*
Monkton	18	17.75	17.86	21*	14.75	17.57*
Robinson	13.67	16.5	15.43	13.33	20	16.67

^{*} Currently 3 students attending LCS are on tuition waivers from MAUSD. This projection assumes those students return to MAUSD.

^{**} A kindergarten classroom was added at BES in anticipation of a larger than typical kindergarten cohort which did not materialize.

This added position is not included in the class size figures for FY24.

^{**} Enrollment figures assume a reduction of one classroom at Robinson

Class Size Guidelines

Grade Cluster	Minimum Average	Optimal Average Range	Maximum Average
K-2	14	14-18	20
3-4	14	14-18	Grade 3 = 20 Grade 4 = 25
5-6	14	14-20	25
7-8	14	14-22	25
9-12	18	18-22	English - 100 per teacher Others - 150 per teacher

\$0 Fund Balance Used

(2.96% increase in cost per pupil)

	FY24
Total Expenses	\$31,140,049
Revenue	\$5,681,569
ducation Spending	\$25,458,480
qualized Pupils	1247.18
Spending per Eq. Pupil	\$20,412.84
	(+\$586.37) +2.96%

FY24 Spending Threshold

Projected Spending Threshold Per EQP	Projected Spending Per EQP	Amount Per EQP Under Threshold	Projected EQP	Amount Under Spending Threshold
\$20,576	\$20,412.84	\$163.16	1247.18	\$203,490

Projected Tax Rates If \$0 Fund Balance Used

	FY 24						
	Bristol	Bristol Monkton New Haven Starksbo					
Homestead Tax Rate	1.5332	1.5332	1.5332	1.5332			
Act 46 Adjustment	00	00	00	00			
Adjusted Homestead Tax	1.5332	1.5332	1.5332	1.5332			
Current CLA	87.40	87.78	87.25%	82.68%			
Property Tax Rate	1.7542	1.7466	1.7572	1.8544			

Projected Change in Tax Rates If \$0 Fund Balance Used

		Property (Afte	Change Per \$100,000 of		
	FY 22	FY 23	FY 24	Change	Assessed Value
Bristol	1.7631	1.7534	1.7542	+.0008	+\$.80
Monkton	1.7482	1.7458	1.7466	+.0008	+\$.80
New Haven	1.7801	1.7564	1.7572	+.0008	+\$.80
Starksboro	1.7486	1.8543	1.8544	+.0001	+\$.10

Projected Change in Tax Rates w/ \$0 of Fund Balance Used Based on Income

Education Tax Based on Addison County 2020 Median Income	\$70,262
Education Tax FY23	\$1,981
Education Tax FY24	\$1,855
Projected \$ Decrease	\$126
Projected % Decrease	6.36%

Lincoln School District FY24 Budget In A Supervisory Union w/MAUSD

Assumptions Behind the October Figures

- Assumes all the same assumptions as 4 town SD plus
- Assumes SU assessment

Lincoln Community School Enrollment FY18 - FY24

	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24 Projected
Lincoln	116	117	107	82	76	71	62*

^{*} Currently 3 students attend LCS on tuition waivers from MAUSD. This projection assumes those students return to MAUSD.

Average Class Size

		<u> 2022 - 2023</u>		20	<u>)23 - 2024 Proje</u>	<u>cted</u>
	Avg K-2 Class Size	Avg 3-6 Class Size	Overall Avg Class Size	Avg K-2 Class Size	Avg 3-6 Class Size	Overall Avg Class Size
Lincoln	14	21.5	17.75	12.5*	18.5*	15.5*

^{*} Currently 3 students attend LCS on tuition waivers from MAUSD. This projection assumes those students return to MAUSD.

LSD Budget FY24

(35.91% increase in cost per pupil)

FY24
* * * *
\$4,795,068
\$160,486
\$4,634,582
172.00
\$26,945.24 (+\$7119.87) +35.91%

FY24 Spending Threshold

Projected Spending Threshold Per EQP	Projected Spending Per EQP	Amount Per EQP <mark>Over</mark> Threshold	Projected EQP	Amount Over Spending Threshold
\$20,576	\$26,945.24	\$6,369.24	172.0	\$1,095,509

Projected Tax Rate

	FY 24
	Lincoln
Homestead Tax Rate	2.0238
Act 46 Adjustment	00
Adjusted Homestead Tax	2.0238
Current CLA	100.17%
Property Tax Rate	2.0204

<u>Projected Change in Tax Rates If \$0 Fund Balance</u> <u>Used</u>

		Property (Afte	Change Per \$100,000 of		
	FY 22	FY 23	FY 24	Change	Assessed Value
Lincoln	1.5266	1.5299	2.0204	+.4905	+\$490.50

Projected Change in Lincoln Tax Rate Based on Income

Education Tax Based on Addison County 2020 Median Income	\$70,262
Education Tax FY23	\$1,982
Education Tax FY24	\$2,445
Projected \$ Increase	\$463
Projected % Increase	23.36%